

Polar Bear
Provincial Park

Public Participation – ^{C.} Publications
A Summary of Comments


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*"There seems to be a new idea of what a park is here.
The land is powerful because of its many nameless
lakes and most because the ocean borders it. The
idea prophecied by Thomas Hardy lies behind the place;
that in the coming age, man would turn from the facile
beauty of the temperate climates to a cold inhospitable
land whose nature is more in keeping with the stoic
element in human life."*

John Bell,
Lakefield, Ontario



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INTRODUCTION

In August, 1977 the Polar Bear Provincial Park - Background Information and Planning Proposal were released to the public by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. At that time the Ministry solicited public response - especially to the Planning Proposal document.

This publication is a summary of this input from individuals and groups, compiled from written submissions and verbal comments (made at public information centres which were operated at Moose Factory, Moosonee, and Toronto; and at various Ministry meetings with representatives of the Indian Bands most directly affected by the park - Attawapiskat, Fort Severn, and Winisk).

The format for this publication aligns itself with the headings used in the Planning Proposal publication.

Generally, the response was of a very high quality. Much of it has persuaded the Ministry to change some of the suggestions which were made in the Planning Proposal.

Because of the concerned interest in the park as expressed by respondents or implied by their submissions, this publication is considerably more detailed and lengthy than is usually the case with such documents.

The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources herewith expresses its sincere gratitude to all of those who took the time and effort to study the Background Information and Planning Proposal publications, and who then submitted such valuable constructive criticism.

During 1980 a final master plan will be prepared which will contain many of the recommendations contained herein. Upon approval by the Minister of Natural Resources, the plan will be released to the public as the official policy for the future planning and management of the park.

1. OBJECTIVES OF THE MASTER PLANNING PROGRAM

Comment: *"We agree with the objectives of the Master Planning Proposal..."*
[Sierra Club of Ontario, Toronto, Ontario]

* * * * *

Comment: *Emphasize preservation rather than use.*
[Harold A. Wills, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: Agreed.

* * * * *

Comment: *Regarding public participation, the views of the scientific community should receive a higher weighting with "participation of 'the public' as only a secondary and conditional element in the program".*
[Harold A. Wills, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: Because of the nature and classification of Polar Bear Provincial Park, "scientific" briefs have been actively solicited, but any submission which makes reasonable, well-substantiated suggestions will be used to help produce the master plan.

2. GOAL

Comment: *First section of the goal statement should read: "To protect its environment and wildlife for the benefit of present and future generations from significant alterations by humans."*
[Sierra Club of Ontario, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: "Environment" in this case refers to the park's ecological communities which includes its wildlife. This point will be emphasized in the statement explaining the goal.

* * * * *

Comment: *Goal statement should give research a higher priority than wilderness recreation.*
[Harold A. Wills, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: Both activities are valid uses of a wilderness park. The demand for wilderness recreation opportunities is greater and the supply shorter than is the demand for wilderness research opportunities. The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources does not believe that one should be given priority over the other.

* * * * *

Comment: *Goal statement should be expanded to include: "scientific research...complementary to Ministry of Natural Resources programs".*

[A. J. Stewart, Moosonee, Ontario]

Response: Agreed. Its large size and strategic location for polar bear and migrating wildfowl make Polar Bear Provincial Park important for research and monitoring studies related to the national and international scene rather than the park specifically.

* * * * *

Comment: *Park/native people relationship should be identified in the goal statement.*

[Representatives of the Winisk Band, Winisk, Ontario]

Comment: *"...with regard to the employment of native people these considerations are of such importance that they should be recognized in the statements of objectives and goals. Such statements should go beyond references to employment and provide for protection of traditional trapping rights, of traditional subsistence, dwelling and hunting rights - subject to observance by such privileged native groups of the basic priority claim of posterity in maintenance of the primitive environment for further scientific study. It is further suggested that the basic goals and rights finally agreed upon with respect to the native peoples should be formalized for the entire park area not only in regulations, but in statute, so that changes may require decision by Legislature."*

[Harold A. Wills, Toronto, Ontario]

Comment: *"One of the two most difficult aspects of the entire plan is the manner in which native activities - particularly hunting and trapping - should be handled. We, as an organization,*

must admit that we find ourselves on the horns of a dilemma, an ambivalence for which there is no ready solution. ...we are inclined to accept the thrust of the policies suggested; that legitimate historical activities of native people be accepted provided:

- (a) that these are not expanded or extended
- (b) that some form of control can be achieved which prevents improvement of efficacy to the point of damaging the resource
- (c) that these continue only so long as they remain actually being operated by present families, and
- (d) that there is a recognition and commitment by both Ministry of Natural Resources and the native community to reduce or terminate the activity when any damage upon the resource is shown or anticipated."

[The Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Don Mills, Ontario]

Reponse: The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (M.N.R.) agrees that the park/native people relationship should be identified in an appendage to the goal statement. Such a statement should enshrine a continuation of the native people's privilege to carry out their historical activities, provided that these do not compromise the wilderness integrity of the park in a permanent way.

3. STATEMENT EXPLAINING THE GOAL

Comment: "The statement explaining - or more accurately interpreting and ranking - the multiple park goals is perhaps the most important and commendable aspect of the Planning Concepts. For too long, the standard multiple goal of provincial parks has been left to stand on its own in park master plans without any ranking of often - contradictory and competitive objectives. The result has been inconsistent, and at times opportunistic, application of park goals. Almost anything that someone wished to do within the park could be rationalized under one or other of the park goals, no matter how damaging or inappropriate to other goals. Logging, massive campgrounds, dissecting roadways and even gross overdevelopment could all be rationalized under one of these goals.

The interpretation statement for Polar Bear Park provides for the first time a basic, consistent philosophy for that specific park which effectively ranks the park goals. It provides a clear, and almost unmistakable guidepost against which future schemes and activities may be judged. Although there remain some minor wording difficulties in this statement, it is an important addition to the plan, and provides the correct direction for planners and managers to pursue."

[The Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Don Mills, Ontario]

Response: This format will be used in the master plan.

The Ministry will endeavour to adopt this format in future master plans where more emphasis is given to protection over recreation (i.e. Nature Reserve Parks).

* * * * *

Comment: *"On page 1 [of the Planning Proposal] we would suggest the addition of the words, 'or disturbance' after the sentence '...the aim should be to permit the least possible amount of humanly caused alteration or disturbance'. We are concerned about aircraft harassment, camping adjacent to nesting colonies, etc."*

[A. J. Stewart, Moosonee, Ontario]

Response: Agreed.

* * * * *

Comment: *"On page 1 [of the Planning Proposal] the statement, 'Park policies should allow for scientific research of a non-destructive nature' needs clarifying. Most research is destructive, ranging from picking flowers to shooting animals. This summer...the Canadian Wildlife Service will be collecting shorebird specimens. Perhaps the statement should be reworded to 'allow for scientific research complementary to Ministry of Natural Resources programs'."*

[A. J. Stewart, Moosonee, Ontario]

Response: Agreed.

4. PARK CLASSIFICATION

Comment: *"Use the term 'Nature Reserve' instead of park."*

[Toronto Information Centre, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: 'Wilderness provincial park' most accurately designates Polar Bear. This term is also consistent with the Ontario Provincial Parks Classification System.

* * * * *

Comment: *"We applaud the proposal to designate Polar Bear Park as a Wilderness Park and appreciate the restriction that such a designation places on its use, however, we agree that only this classification would offer the appropriate safeguards for a fragile environment such as we believe exists over the major part of Polar Bear Park."*

[Sierra Club of Ontario, Toronto, Ontario]

5. ACCESS ZONES

Comment: *"The proposed regulatory structures set out in the section on Access Zones [page 3 of the Planning Proposal] deserve special praise. It is to be hoped that these will be retained in full; that if any changes are made they will provide for ever stricter control and enforcement. In no circumstances should weaker requirements be laid down, or erosion of the rules through inadequate staffing and policing be permitted."*

[Harold A. Wills, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: Such regulatory controls will be incorporated into the master plan.

6. ACTIVITIES AND FACILITIES (ACCESS ZONES)

Comment: *"I believe that the ban on mechanized vehicles is wise [page 3 of the Planning Proposal]... Have you thought of any size limitation as well? Are park personnel to be able to use motorized vehicles?"*

[J. G. Nelson, Waterloo, Ontario]

Response: The size of mechanized vehicles to be permitted in the park does not appear to be a problem now or in the future. Park personnel will be permitted to use mechanized vehicles in the park only

as required to carry out their duties. Where practical they would use the same means of transportation as visitors.

* * * * *

Comment: *"The statement that 'The emphasis should be placed completely on unmechanized activities with very few exceptions' (page 1 of the Planning Proposals) should be supported by outright prohibition of snowmobile and all-terrain vehicles, power boats and Hovercraft, except within very closely defined limits, with seizure of vehicles as the minimum punishment for infraction, and confiscation by court judgement the ultimate sanction. The most dangerous form of law-breaking is likely to be by the owners or charterers of private planes, but any wilful violation of prescribed routes and flying heights should be severely penalized, with confiscation of the plane as obligatory."*

[Harold A. Wills, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: Agreed. Except that native people may continue to use snow machines and motor canoes for trapping and hunting activities as discussed in item 21.

* * * * *

Comment: *Must entry into the interior be made only through access zones?*
"If it is intended to allow canoe access to the park from road or rail via the Sutton River, it is difficult to see why the entire Winisk River has been declared an access zone. If this is intended to signal the permissibility of motorized canoe use on the Winisk River, this would seem to imply that the coast (where, I suggest, motors are far more important than on the Winisk) is out of bounds to them. This is further implied on p. 3: 'mechanized vehicles should not be permitted except in the case of motor canoes used by native guides at the Sutton River and Winisk River access zones', which contradicts page 1: 'Exceptions could include...power boats...along the coast'."

[John Cross, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: Entry into the interior may be made from access zones and at the periphery of the park.

Motorized canoes may be used by native guides on the Sutton and

Winisk rivers and along the coast. The Winisk River access corridor some day might accommodate a winter road from Attawapiskat (and Moosonee) to Winisk.

* * * * *

Comment: Recommend first aid facilities at access points.

[P. A. McMullan, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: First aid facilities will be available at all staffed access points.

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Comment: "There will be a temptation for visitors (and perhaps even for staff) privileged to reach the Park and its coastal waters, to seek 'grandstand' views, perhaps so as to disturb nesting birds, to frighten polar bears, caribou, whales, etc. It should be made clear that such misuse of privilege is not only forbidden, but that privileged people are 'honour bound' to obey all regulations in spirit as well as letter. The ecosystems to be preserved are not only unique, but fragile, and prompt, severe punishment should be visited upon persons damaging them, or threatening to do so."

[Harold A. Wills, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: Agreed.

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Comment: "Strictest enforcement of rules as to filing of flight plans and travel routes, carrying of adequate supplies and equipment, will be required. There is no reason why the public should be put to the expense of salvage or rescue operations by careless or deliberate violation of the rules."

[Harold A. Wills, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: M.N.R. will strongly recommend such procedures.

* * * * *

Comment: Recommend only "temporary and non-permanent" facilities. "No buildings and support equipment should be allowed. No boats, trails or campsites should be made available. Above all, no descriptive signs etc. are necessary. At present the people

who do travel there are more than well aware of that which your signs could offer."

[R. J. Hatkoski, Dwight, Ontario]

Response: Minimal facilities - some permanent - will be required to manage and operate this very large park.

* * * * *

Comment: *"As a pilot, I am afraid of your proposals for Sutton, Brant and Site 415. You are going to encourage aircraft to come to landing areas that vary in depth depending on the rains and the season, subject to crosswinds and having short takeoff distances. Do you realize the type of plane and pilot that could come?"*

[R. J. Hatkoski, Dwight, Ontario]

Comment: *"Can the proposed landing sites be licensed by the Ministry of Transportation and Communications?"*

We disagree with some of the proposed access zones.

- (a) Brant River At times a difficult and dangerous place to land. Water levels fluctuate considerably and strong cross winds are normal. At least 50% of the time...pilots find landing impossible.*
- (b) Shagamu River Landing in the river is difficult and dangerous most of the time. The small lake our aircraft normally lands on has unpredictable water fluctuations that make it dangerous as well. Aborted landing attempts are common.*
- (c) Sutton River Questionable landing. Fluctuating water levels with normal strong cross winds...pilots view it with a skeptical eye... The maintenance of staff and facilities at these sites, to us, would be a mistake. Few people will visit the sites and our experience would indicate that only half of those will actually be able to land. We would suggest confining access to 415 and Winisk. Perhaps the Brant, Sutton and Shagamu could be reserved as remote landing sites for the more experienced and adventuresome park visitor and not published as*

regular access points."

[A. J. Stewart, Moosonee, Ontario]

Response: Recent experience has confirmed hazardous landing and takeoff problems at some of the recommended access points. Ministry of Natural Resources will recommend only Transport Canada approved landing areas; however, should the Shagamu and Sutton landing sites not be approved, aircraft landings will still be permitted - at the user's risk.

There are few alternatives to the recommended access points in Polar Bear Provincial Park.

7. USER CAPACITIES (ACCESS ZONES)

Comment: *Support for a quota and reservation system, and concern regarding environmental impact in access zones and about surpassing the optimum capacity in the rest of the park.*

[Toronto Information Centre, Toronto, Ontario]

Comment: *"When the time comes for the quota system to be implemented, Canadian citizens should be given some degree of preference over foreign visitors".*

[P. A. McMullan, Toronto, Ontario]

Comment: *"The various airstrips could be used to their full capacity to ensure a good distribution of park visitors... We believe that it would defeat the intention of creating a wilderness park by using Site #415 only, as an access point - for the following reasons.*

- (1) Too great a concentration of visitors would negate the possibility of a wilderness experience.*
- (2) Areas close to the site, with their limited carrying capacity, would quickly become overused, also the number of potential visitors would be severely restricted.*
- (3) Potential work for the residents would be mainly available in one location, and consequently they may all want to locate in that area for the summer.*

[Sierra Club of Ontario, Toronto, Ontario]

Comment: *"The need to set quotas based upon carrying capacity is recognized and supported...a prerequisite to developing any facility in this fragile environment is a commitment to monitor its condition, and to curtail use whenever site deterioration develops and for however long necessary to permit recovery. The cost of such monitoring and closure must be considered an integral cost of the development. In this vein, the prohibition on overflow is commended. So also is the recognition that suggested site capacities be treated as maximal figures, and subject to reduction should site consideration pose problems."*

[The Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Don Mills, Ontario]

Comment: *"The capacity of the park should be determined. This is very important."*

[The Cochrane Railway and Pioneer Museum Board, Cochrane, Ontario]

Response: "Park access zones and other park areas would be monitored at the end of each visitor season to ensure that capacities have been accurately set so that no more than an acceptable minimum of site deterioration will be experienced during any one year."
(From the Planning Proposal)

Regarding quota systems, the same approach identified for Quetico Provincial Park will be instituted for Polar Bear Provincial Park. An excerpt from the Quetico Master Plan best summarizes this approach:

It may become necessary in the future to establish separate quotas for residents and non-residents to ensure that residents have access opportunity to their resource. The essential concern here is that, as both resident and non-resident demands continue to increase and the park's defined capacity cannot accommodate both, the overwhelming disparity in proportion between residents and non-residents will result in a situation whereby residents might be denied access while non-residents saturate the park. Thus, separate resident and non-resident quotas will be incorporated into the visitor regulation program if required to avoid such an outcome. This ratio will ensure that, within the constraints imposed by the defined wilderness recreational carrying capacity, the satisfaction of resident demand is given priority.

Because of the potential hazards associated with some of the park access points, Site 421 (the only airstrip in Polar Bear Provincial Park with the exception of the one at Site 415) will be given serious consideration as an additional access zone to insure that visitors will have reasonable access alternatives to choose from in this very large park.

Access zones, by their very nature unfortunately, are seldom conducive to quality wilderness experiences. Rather, they are dispersal areas to such places. However, with limiting design considerations (pathways, platforms, etc.), control of numbers, and alert monitoring techniques, access points should not present overuse problems.

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Comment: "Interior users should be encouraged to submit an itinerary although this should not be mandatory."

[P. A. McMullan, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: Agreed.

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Comment: "Bottle and can restrictions should be established for those venturing into areas other than the constructed camping zones. These restrictions may not have to be introduced until the quota system is enforced."

[P. A. McMullan, Toronto, Ontario]

Comment: "Ban the following from the park - aerosol cans, pop and beer cans and plastic bags. Restrict the amount of alcohol."

*[The Cochrane Railway and Pioneer Museum Board,
Cochrane, Ontario]*

Response: Bottle and can restrictions are being considered for Polar Bear Provincial Park. No alcohol restriction is anticipated.

8. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (ACCESS ZONES)

Comment: "...we had some confusion with the comment on fishing... Is there any restriction implied on the use of gill nets by native

people on the Sutton and the Brant?"

[A. J. Stewart, Moosonee, Ontario]

Comment: *"Since in Primitive Parks, hunting is not allowed, and considering both the potential for hunting outside the Park and the already established camps elsewhere, we would like to know the reasons why hunting will be allowed inside the Park boundary."*

[The Conservation Council of Ontario, Toronto, Ontario]

Comment: *"...we would add sharp-tailed grouse to the list of huntable species. We would also suggest sharp-tailed and grouse hunting be allowed throughout the park during the legal season. The species are cyclic. Hunting would occur during the slack park season and we feel it is a compatible wilderness recreational experience. The problem of firearms in the park during the closed hunting season (i.e. summer months) for protection against polar bears is tough to resolve. In general we have found that polar bear authorities feel protection is necessary for people in an area inhabited by bears... We are reluctant to see summer visitors carrying firearms; however, we also feel if there is a danger, visitors must be allowed to protect themselves. Perhaps the best compromise would be to zone the areas of heaviest bear activities as off limits to all park visitors."*

[A. J. Stewart, Moosonee, Ontario]

Response: Fishing will be managed in accordance with The Ontario Fishery Regulations (Division 24 and 25). Artificial lures only will be permitted (so as to prevent the possible introduction of exotic species into park ecosystems), and brook trout catches will be limited to a possession limit of 3 fish.

Non-aboriginal hunting is listed as a non-compatible use in all zones of wilderness parks (in the Ontario Provincial Parks Planning and Management Policies, 1978). In the Planning Proposal (pages 1 and 5) Ministry of Natural Resources has argued that hunting should be allowed to continue at the two small access zones at the Shagamu and Sutton rivers to permit the local Cree operators of the camps to continue one of the very few opportunities they have to make a living in the area.

Ministry of Natural Resources will negotiate with the appropriate bands regarding the possibility of designating the Brant, Shagamu and Sutton rivers as "off limits" to gill-netting by native people.

Sharp-tailed grouse will be added to the list of huntable species (ducks, geese, ptarmigan and snipe) at the Shagamu and Sutton access zones only, where limited hunting by non-native people is already permitted as explained in the Planning Proposal. No non-native hunting will be permitted anywhere else in the park in accordance with the Ontario Provincial Parks Planning and Management Policies (1978) for wilderness parks (page WI-IV-7)

Regarding the use of firearms by visitors for bear protection, sealed firearms may be carried by visitors for emergency protection only by request to the District Manager. If this policy results in problems, areas of heavy polar bear concentration will be zoned off limits to park visitors during such periods of high bear density.

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Comment: "I would strongly suggest that you implement those proposals that are aimed at protecting the delicate environment of the park..."

[R. J. Hatkoski, Dwight, Ontario]

Response: Agreed.

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Comment: "Other concerns include gasoline handling and storage facilities and possible leachate from toilets and solid waste disposal sites. I agree that some environmental monitoring will be necessary due to lack of experience with the design and operation of facilities in this type of climate and terrain and to the fragile nature of aquatic communities in this area. I assume that the Ministry of the Environment will be involved with the review and/or approval of facilities during detailed design so that these concerns may be addressed and suitable monitoring programs developed."

[Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Thunder Bay, Ontario]

Response: Agreed.

9. VISITOR SERVICES (ACCESS ZONES)

Comment: "In the provision of promotional and informational service, it will be necessary to strike a nice balance between needed publicity and education on the one hand, and the temptation to justify current investment by building up a flow of sportsmen, hobbyists and tourists on the other hand. Perhaps a useful primary rule would be to avoid all 'hard sell' operations. Emphasis should be placed on the scientific/future-time objectives of the programme. Rather than seeking to enlarge visitor flow, the aim should be to keep it at the minimum required for attainment of basic objectives..."

It is respectfully suggested that it would be worthwhile for the Ministry to make a special effort to educate...members of the legislature and cabinet - as well as the outdoors, conservation and tourism specialists of the media - the boards of conservation bodies - as to the reasons for the special constraints governing the approach to this particular park's programme. What should be sought is not publicity but understanding..."

[Harold A. Wills, Toronto, Ontario]

Comment: "Your proposals lead me to envision another Algonquin Park, an area that has been overadvertised and to which irreparable damage has been wrought."

[R. J. Hatkoski, Dwight, Ontario]

Comment: "We think it essential that park visitors shall be well informed before they arrive at the park. Detailed information on the park, the requirements for visitors to be adequately equipped, etc. - especially those on extended visits should be available at Moosonee and other departure points rather than on arrival. We believe that the Ministry should make the nature of the park known not only to the minority who will ever visit it, but to the majority who support it morally and through their taxes. This could be done via the medium of the National Film Board and Educational Television."

[Sierra Club of Ontario, Toronto, Ontario]

Comment: "One aspect not dealt with sufficiently by the Planning Concepts, yet of fundamental importance to the park, is that of advertising

and dealing with the media. In real measure, the clientele, attitude and behaviour of visitors, and park quality are created by the literature on and media attention to the park.

The Federation does not object to the intent of the brief statement included in the planning concepts. We are concerned more about the manner and extent of material and coverage in literature and the media. Polar Bear should be deliberately downplayed as a destination, rather than promoted as 'the exotic place to visit'. Materials should stress its extreme fragility and the need for special care by visitors. Particularly sensitive localities should not be identified in this literature, no matter how outstanding their interest to visitors. Special provision might well be made as an alternative, whereby groups wishing to visit a particularly fragile location could arrange to do so accompanied by a special Ministry of Natural Resources naturalist.

The master planning alone is generating considerable interest in Polar Bear Park.

It is important that this not be promoted into a flood (in Polar Bear's terms). And it is vital that prospective visitors be conditioned to 'special care' and 'special controls' from the very outset of their interest in visitation."

[The Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Don Mills, Ontario]

Comment: "A crest or badge for people who visit this park would be a good way of advertising this area... A film documentary should be made of the park for use on Television throughout Ontario."

[The Cochrane Railway and Pioneer Museum Board, Cochrane, Ontario]

Comment: "...we disagree that staff, publications, etc., should be located at all access zones. To us, only Moosonee, Winisk and Site 415 appear suitable for such service."

[A. J. Stewart, Moosonee, Ontario]

Response: Many valuable suggestions and observations are contained in this series of comments. Most will be integrated into the section of the master plan which deals with visitor services. Specifically, in keeping with the goal statement, the environmental vulnerability of the park to human activity will be stressed

at all times. "Hard" information for prospective users will concentrate upon visitor safety and the challenges of camping in a subarctic/arctic region. The interpretive component of the visitor services package for Polar Bear Provincial Park will be emphasized at Moosonee and in certain media productions which may be used elsewhere such as movies, slide programs, exhibits and publications. Much of the content of such material will be produced to meet the needs of vicarious users.

"Particularly sensitive localities" will not be identified in any visitor services material. Access to such places likely will be restricted in any case.

Ministry of Natural Resources will try to avoid any suggestion of "hard sell" advertising in its efforts to inform the public of Polar Bear Provincial Park.

Ministry of Natural Resources agrees that visitor services staff, facilities, and media are not required at access zones (excluding Site 415) except that publications should be made available at the Shagamu and Sutton access points to goose camp clientele.

10. RESEARCH (ACCESS ZONES)

Comment: "...will there be any zoning of flights and lower limits, so as to protect against disturbance of caribou and other animals during calving and other key periods? In this regard, are the calving and other critical areas known and will they be built into zoning use at an early stage? I don't see much on scientific inventory research in either of the reports. How much of this is underway? What's the budget now and for the next five years or so?"

[J. G. Nelson, Waterloo, Ontario]

Response: Transport Canada has issued a number of directives pertaining to aircraft/animal conflicts which pertain to Polar Bear Provincial Park as follows:

- (1) "Caribou Herds - Northern Canada: ...the co-operation of all is requested in eliminating any action which might lead to unnecessary losses of these valuable animals." (Aviation circular 0/30/64)

- (2) "Migratory birds: ...the attention of all concerned is directed toward this matter, in order that they may avoid these areas when birds are using them.
Following is a list showing the principal areas frequented by geese at different times of the year...coast of Hudson Bay and James Bay from the Ontario-Manitoba boundary to Ontario-Quebec boundary...1st May to 31st October."
(Aviation circular 0/30/64)
- (3) "Conservation of Moose - Northern Canada: ...Except in emergency, therefore, flights of aircraft below 1,000 feet over moose should be avoided." (Information circular 0/16/70)
- (4) "James Bay Coast - Quebec and Ontario: ...all pilots should avoid overflying this area, within five miles of the coastal tidal marshes below 2,000 feet above ground level during the periods April 15 - June 15 and September 1 - October 1. All aircraft approaches to coastal settlements or goose hunting camps should be made over inland terrain insofar as is practicable."

Some animals, apparently, are little affected by aircraft; for example, Jonkel¹ points out that with a few qualifications "it would seem reasonable to propose that polar bears in such areas as Polar Bear Provincial Park in Ontario and on Cape Churchill in Manitoba might be viewed as often as desired by aerial tourists flying from nearby bases".

In addition to mentioning Transport Canada's directives, park visitor information will stress the importance of the right of animals to range, unmolested by aircraft or any other sort of human interference, in this wilderness park. If additional controls become necessary, they will be devised under the authority vested in the Minister of Natural Resources under The Provincial Parks Act (item 17).

The movement of animals such as polar bears and caribou is known in a general way as indicated in the Background Information booklet. Ongoing research on such matters is being done at

¹Charles J. Jonkel, "The Effects of Various Aircraft on Polar Bear Populations." Unpublished Manuscript, 1969, page 8.

the provincial level by the Wildlife Branch.

At this time, no special funds have been budgeted towards research in Polar Bear Provincial Park.

Were new critical areas; for example, calving grounds, to be discovered in the park, they would certainly be identified and integrated into the zoning plan.

* * * * *

Comment: "By itself Polar Bear Park stands as a significant development in Ontario's parks programme, and a pledge to the future. Its significance and value will be immeasurably increased if it is considered as the foundation of a centre for research relating to Canada's Eastern Arctic. Because of its location, transportation facilities for approach, comparative proximity of government and university structures and personnel, Polar Bear Park is the ideal practical cornerstone for such a project. Best of all, it now exists on an imperial scale, under public ownership and legal protection..."

Scientific disciplines from A to Z have a common interest in the North as a separate but integrated area of study - astronomy, archaeology, anthropology, biology, botany, geology, history, hydrology, meteorology, paleontology, zoology.

Co-operation would have to be sought in two main directions: that of the federal government, within whose jurisdiction falls most of the Arctic area; that of the universities which have shown particular interest in the Eastern Arctic. To both can be offered access to this now established and protected natural laboratory, at a central gateway more easily reached from the main areas of population and research facilities than any other in the country. Co-operation in planning and carrying out exploratory and research expeditions, laboratory projects, library consolidation, would have obvious advantages.

Universities likely to be most interested are Toronto, York, Laurentian, Trent. They might be invited to consider coming together in a consortium to correlate their Arctic studies with those of federal and Ontario government departments. (Lakehead University has a large and separable field of interest in the

Indians, history of the North-West Company, the unique environmental problems of Northwestern Ontario...)

The difficulty of obtaining co-operation by the Federal authorities is recognized. Failure to enlist this sharing in the task need not preclude action by the Province of Ontario, its universities and organisations committed to work in the Arctic."

[Harold A. Wills, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: This noble proposal conflicts in a major way with direction provided in the Ontario Provincial Parks Planning and Management Policies (1978). The destructive nature of most research projects (from collecting flowers to taking animal specimens) almost by definition is quite strictly curtailed in wilderness parks. Research done in Polar Bear Provincial Park in addition to being "compatible with protection values and recreation uses" of the park would be required to contribute to Polar Bear's "knowledge of natural and cultural history, and to environmental and recreational management of wilderness". Also, restrictions regarding types of equipment and facilities would severely limit the scope of many legitimate and promising research projects. Furthermore, the park area is truly representative of only a small region within the eastern Arctic. Polar Bear Provincial Park could very easily be part of such a grand scheme, but it probably should not be at the centre of it.

* * * * *

Comment: *"We support research as a park activity, but we believe that the Ministry should encourage the type of research that is useful in filling gaps in its data on the park environment and wildlife populations, and at the same time discourage research that is repetitive and of value only to the researcher."*

[Sierra Club of Ontario, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: Agreed.

* * * * *

Comment: "There is a prohibition on the use of 'motors' by park visitors. Does this apply to scientists working in the park on approved research projects?"

[H. G. Lumsden, Maple, Ontario]

Response: Motorized equipment essential to Ministry approved research will be permitted in Polar Bear Park.

* * * * *

Comment: "...Site 415 is a good choice [for the location of research facilities]."

[A. J. Stewart, Moosonee, Ontario]

11. ACTIVITIES AND FACILITIES (WILDERNESS ZONES)

Comment: "...the idea of marked hiking trails should be carefully evaluated...the anticipated traffic probably does not warrant signing trails."

[A. J. Stewart, Moosonee, Ontario]

Response: Such trails will be marked only as required for safety purposes. Marking will be done as unobtrusively as possible.

12. LAND-USE ADJACENT TO THE PARK

Comment: "...you make the very necessary point that incompatible activities or potentially conflicting activities should be controlled near the park. But we have had difficulty developing the means to do this. Will there be joint management of the buffer zone with other owners and agencies?"

[J. G. Nelson, Waterloo, Ontario]

Comment: "Because of the delicacy of the ecosystems in the region we view the control and management of the watershed of the whole region to be of utmost importance. Future activities such as resource extraction upstream, yet outside the Park boundary, could have severe effects on the Park itself. Even minor pollution of the headwaters of the rivers whose mouths are

inside the Park could destroy the character of the Park. Are there any plans to assure that control will be exercised to prevent degradation in the park itself?"

[The Conservation Council of Ontario, Toronto, Ontario]

Comment: "We understand that there is a limited potential for mineral extraction between the Winisk River and the western boundary of the park in an area immediately south of the park. We are concerned that at some point in time access may be required through the park to Hudson Bay. Also that some kind of terminal facility extending several miles out to deeper water would be a possibility. We are concerned about safeguards regarding [mineral], oil and gas exploration and their possible extraction and how this would affect the future of the park.

At times it would appear that we are overprotective in some areas, for example, ensuring that a tent does not remain more than one day in one place, yet having insufficient control on areas adjacent to the park as an opposite extreme. A major oil spill for instance could be devastating to all the shore birds and the polar bears, and thus wipe out the reason for the park's very existence. Polar Bear Park is perhaps more fragile than any other Provincial Park, and thus zoning as to use of areas adjacent to the park should be given very serious consideration."

[Sierra Club of Ontario, Toronto, Ontario]

Comment: "...I am concerned about the vagueness of the references to out-of-park measures to protect the Park environment. I understand that Ontario Hydro has been considering diversion projects in Northern Ontario, in fact, according to the newspapers, a fatal air crash near Timmins [in 1976] involved members of Hydro who had been consulting the Winisk Cree on possible effects on them of such a diversion. In spite of the fact that these plans will probably not be carried forward for economic reasons, the very fact, that Hydro did not scruple to consider them at a time when Polar Bear and the lower Winisk River had already been granted park status suggests that a strong specific prohibition on activities which alter the Park environment and thereby violate the purpose

of Wilderness parks is required. In [Planning Proposal], p.4, the sentence '...careful evaluations...would be required before any decision can be made' does not make clear whether the decision to be made concerns, and hence jeopardizes the future of Polar Bear Park or the offshore oil explorations, nor does it say in whose hands the decision will lie. I hope this matter will be clarified."

[John Cross, Toronto, Ontario]

Comment: "In addition to the off-shore oil exploration mentioned briefly in the "Planning Proposal", there is a sizeable highly mineralized zone south of the park which may be developed at some future date for iron ore mining or, possibly, for the mining and extraction of other metals. Development of mining south of the park or of commercial oil fields in Hudson Bay could exert pressure for transportation corridors through the park and for shipping terminals in the park. Have these possibilities been considered in planning the park? It is possible that the impact might be lessened by taking some account of these possibilities during the planning stage. For example, possible conflicts between staff office sites, access points or visitor facilities and likely transportation corridors might be avoided."

[Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Thunder Bay, Ontario]

Comment: "We commend the desire articulated in the planning concept that offshore developments should be carefully evaluated before any decision to proceed is made. This, however, is simply not enough.

Commitments are required, and should be sought of both provincial and federal governments with regard to adjacent land-use. Both should commit themselves simply and unequivocally that no activities will be permitted to compromise the park, its environment or its biota.

The commitment of the province is at least as important as that of the Federal Government. With inevitable schemes like exploitation of the Onakawana lignite deposits, potential diversion, or pipelines, it is essential that a commitment exist that any project must be so designed as not to compromise Polar Bear Park"

[The Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Don Mills, Ontario]

Response: Some issues vital to the well-being of Polar Bear Provincial Park. are raised in this series of comments.

The potential for large environmental problems without some form of adjacent (to the park) land-use control is very real. A diversion of the Winisk River, for example, would produce ecological effects in Polar Bear Provincial Park which would be absolutely unacceptable in a wilderness park. Similarly, an oil accident close enough to the park's coastal area could be disastrous: the estuarial region is arguably Polar Bear's most sensitive ecosystem.

The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources is responsible for the management of Polar Bear Provincial Park and its surrounding land area. The importance of watershed control will be identified in the Moosonee District Land-Use Plan so that new developments in the northern section of the Ontario lowlands will not be allowed to adversely affect the environment of Polar Bear Provincial Park. This requirement will also be highlighted in the park master plan.

The government of the Northwest Territories has jurisdiction of the marine area adjacent to the park up to the high tide line. The Ontario government will negotiate with the territorial government to ensure that regulations complementary to Polar Bear Park's are in effect along all the park coastline from the high tide mark to a distance out to sea of 15 km.

In addition, many existing federal and provincial statutes and regulations will help to provide control over land-use adjacent to Polar Bear Provincial Park. The Environmental Assessment Act and The Environmental Protection Act are two examples which should prove to be of particular importance.

* * * * *

Comment: *"...a delimitation of the northern limits of the Polar Bear Provincial Park (northern boundary, 56° 00' latitude - eastern boundary, 81° 30' longitude) would more adequately protect the off-shore rights of the said provincial park."*

[O.C.A. Longmark, Toronto, Ontario]

Comment: *"Can the federal government be approached about a federal wildlife reserve or other appropriate zone off-shore and near the park, perhaps under the Canadian Wildlife Act?"*

[J. G. Nelson, Waterloo, Ontario]

Comment: "We are astonished that four of the seven maternity denning sites for polar bear indicated as being in the region are just outside the park boundary. Should they not be included in the park? Would this not better insure the preservation of polar bear?"

[The Conservation Council of Ontario, Toronto, Ontario]

Comment: "The boundaries of the park appear to have been chosen arbitrarily, while not disagreeing with the size of the park, we believe that alternative boundaries should be considered for the following reasons:

- (a) The Wildlife Map #3 in the Ministry's Submission to the Royal Commission on Northern Environment shows polar bear denning and summering areas extending as far west as the Manitoba border, and wolverine habitat as far south as the Ekwan River.*
- (b) Fig. 10 in the park Background Information publication shows similar to above for polar bears, and indicates a specific denning site between the western park boundary and the Severn River.*
- (c) The Parks Map #7 in the Ministry's submission to the Royal Commission on Northern Environment indicates that both the Ekwan and Severn Rivers are canoe routes managed by the Ministry.*
- (d) Page 50 of the Background Information suggests a circular canoe route from the Shagamu River along the coast and down the Severn River.*

Taking into account the above, that the majority of the wildlife is within 30 miles of the coast, that such an area includes the Historic Routes, the possible access zones and all the proposed hiking trails, also that the topography is lacking in identifiable features - except rivers, we would suggest the following:

That the possibility of alternative boundaries be explored and that one alternative may be to establish boundaries at the Ekwan and Severn Rivers connected by a line (at say 30 miles) parallel to the high water line of the Hudson and James Bay shore."

[Sierra Club of Ontario, Toronto, Ontario]

Comment: "No consequential discussion is given to amending or extending the boundaries of Polar Bear Provincial Park. The only suggestion is that the Federal Government be requested to develop management policies for off-shore islands consistent with the park plan. We, of course, support the latter suggestion.

However, we feel that approval should be sought for a review of boundaries, with an eye to expanding the park to include headwater areas within the park. The only park boundaries which presently bear any semblance to watershed and hence to a self-regulating system are the shoreline, and western boundary of the northern park leg. For most of the park, headwater areas are not included and hence system self-regulation is not ensured; this situation should be remedied.

Additionally, we feel that an effort should be made to effectively add a marine component to the park, as is standard practice with provincial parks. Much of 'the park's' more significant wildlife moves or occurs in the nearshore area and estuaries. We recognize that there may well be federal-provincial jurisdictional considerations in this regard, and that it may be technically (i.e. legalistically) impossible to add this component. But we see no reason why this protection cannot effectively be afforded. And we believe that this would aid both in broadening the park's biota and in affording increased regulatory control over inappropriate entry and exploitation."

[The Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Don Mills, Ontario]

Response: The respondents have advanced some compelling arguments for altering/enlarging the park boundaries.

The problem of regulatory control over the estuarial off-shore area was addressed in the preceding section. Recent polar bear denning surveys ("Productivity and Maternity Denning of Polar Bears in Ontario" by G. B. Kolenosky - Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Wildlife Research Section, November, 1978) reveal that: "denning occurred across the entire northern coastal region, with no evidence of a concentrated maternity denning area" (page 18). This new information weakens the otherwise sound recommendations

that the park boundaries be extended inland.

A considerable area of polar bear denning and wolverine habitat and potential canoe routes already exists within the park.

Polar Bear contains over 400 km of unbroken coastline (except at Winisk) along James and Hudson bays. M.N.R. believes that to expand the park boundaries much further along the coast inevitably would invite challenges and conflict over legitimate requirements for transportation corridors to the coast.

The problem of headwater control is a thorny one. Without considerable land-use control over what happens upstream in the brooks and rivers which flow into Polar Bear Provincial Park, the biological and wilderness integrity of the park will be lessened. To improve this situation meaningfully by expanding the park's boundaries, however, would result in tremendously large additions of parkland. Enclosing the Winisk River system would be out of the question, but even the addition of the Sutton, Aquatuk, or Opinnagau watershed areas would add virtually thousands of square kilometres to an already enormous park. Also, all such additions rightfully would be challenged by the Division of Mines because of the area's high mineral potential rating. In addition, much of the productive negotiations with local native peoples concerning the park has been done on the basis of the existing boundaries. To change these reference points at this stage would add a new element of confusion to an already delicate situation.

M.N.R. will explore the possibility of boundary changes for Polar Bear Provincial Park, but it may be that the most important means of guaranteeing its sanctity will result from insuring good environmental controls over the park's adjacent land and marine areas.

13. NATURE RESERVE ZONE 1 (BLACK DUCK RIVER)

Comment: "...under the Nature Reserves heading we feel Zone 1 should be altered to encompass the main polar bear and goose nesting areas. We would recommend the zone run from the Hook Point to Cape Lookout."
[A. J. Stewart, Moosonee, Ontario]

Response: Agreed.

14. NATURE RESERVE ZONE 3 (SITE 416)

Comment: "One of the realities which planners must constantly remind themselves is that zoning lines or other planning constraints which may be included in a map do not automatically work in the field. Our cursory examination suggests that planners have sufficiently segregated most sensitive zones from activity areas, but we would, nonetheless, encourage careful reexamination of proposed facilities to ensure that access features are far removed from sensitive localities. The one specific situation which we have encountered is that of Nature Reserve Zone 3, south of Site 416 and immediately adjacent to a roadway shown connecting Sites 415 and 416. Protecting the Mytilus deposit from damage will be extremely difficult given this arrangement and the use predicted from the Site 415 access zone.

Penalties, much more stringent than those presently in force, must be instituted with regard to collecting, harrassment of wildlife and garbage removal if goals are to be accomplished."

[The Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Don Mills, Ontario]

Response: Agreed.

15. NATURE RESERVE ZONE 4 (SITE 421)

Comment: "Dismantle and remove all buildings at this site." [The zone could be replaced by Historical Area 4 (Site 415) if "all signs of the Mid-Canada base" are first removed.]

[P. A. McMullan, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: M.N.R. continues to support the designation of Site 421 as a nature reserve zone. The rationale from the Planning Proposal is as follows.

"Zone 4 is the old Mid-Canada Line Site 421, located in a lichen heath-forest tundra region. Unlike the 415-416 complex, the site has been virtually undisturbed since the Mid-Canada Line operations ceased in 1965. It should provide interested parties with an opportunity to study the reaction of the natural environment to a firmly dated physical disturbance of considerable magnitude."

16. POLICIES (NATURE RESERVE ZONES)

Comment: "On camping facilities, I believe the reservation idea is a good one to begin with. Are you going to restrict camping to certain areas outside the access zones? Or, alternatively, are you going to prohibit camping in certain areas, perhaps known highly sensitive areas outside the access zones?"

Response: The Ontario Provincial Parks Planning and Management Policies (1978) prohibits camping in nature reserve zones except in connection with temporary research activities. Camping will be prohibited in all 4 historical areas.

* * * * *

Comment: "According to the map in Background Information, p.51, Wachi Creek and the Black Duck river are not canoe routes. Is this in fact correct? If so, there would appear to be an access problem for researchers wishing to study Nature Reserve Zones 1 and 5. Is it proposed to waive the prohibition on, for example, helicopters, in favour of some of the "special interest groups" who alone are to be allowed access to these zones? (Some researchers might also wish to move research equipment to Site 421 via the airstrip).

Severe restrictions on access to NR zones and Historical areas are hinted at in the sections on those zone types. While the number of people permitted in a sensitive area may be a matter for experts to determine, the choice of just who should be permitted in, of all those who might wish to award themselves the title 'special interest group', would seem to me a very legitimate subject for public comment. I am therefore surprised to see no mention in the Planning Proposal of the rules by which some will be let in and others kept out. Is this information to be included in the Master Plan? Are there already Ministry guidelines on who is considered 'special'?"

[John Cross, Toronto, Ontario]

Comment: "...under the heading Policies we feel the term 'special interest groups' should be defined. In one respect, any group that makes the trip to Polar Bear Park, considering the expense and difficulty is special interest.

...once again special interest needs defining. [We] feel anyone visiting the park should have access to all areas that do not involve disturbance to animal life or danger to the public."

[A. J. Stewart, Moosonee, Ontario]

Response: River/coastal access by canoe on the Black Duck and Wachi is possible although the Wachi tends to be shallow and difficult most of the season.

M.N.R. believes that researchers should have to comply with park rules the same as any other visitors. However, if it could be shown that the benefits to the park resulting from research which would require compromising access or motorized equipment policy were significant enough, regulations could be waived. (The policy and procedure for research in provincial parks requires that district, regional, and main office approve the research project and any guidelines for carrying it out.)

M.N.R. believes that the respondents have made a very important statement about the issue of special interest groups. The Ministry agrees that: "anyone visiting the park should have access to all the areas that do not involve disturbance to animal life or danger to the public". Even in the latter situation, discretely conducted research projects might be possible - again under the advisement of the District Manager.

17. HISTORICAL AREAS

Comment: "In the section on Historical areas (page 5), would it not be appropriate to draw attention to the fact that Cape Henrietta Maria was named by Captain Thomas James, who explored this coastline in 1631, for the Queen (after whom also his ship was named), and that James Bay preserves the name of this worthy explorer and writer?

[Harold A. Wills, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: This information will be included in the master plan.

18. HISTORICAL AREA 2 (LAKE RIVER)

Comment: "The remnants of the Hudson Bay Post settlement at Lake River should be dismantled and reconstructed at another location such as Winisk, Fort Severn or Moosonee. The settlement could be well documented in a Park Museum located at one of the camping sites or in Winisk or in Moosonee. Relocation in Moosonee could allow a greater number of people to see these historical buildings. The area could still be left as an historical site, without the buildings, for those who may be interested in the location only."

[P. A. McMullan, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: The Ontario Provincial Parks Planning and Management Policies (1978) for wilderness parks (page Wi-111-3) declares that: "All physical improvements on acquired lands will be removed, unless they are in a location and of such design as to be of value for park management of visitor services, or unless they are significant to the park's history or complementary to its cultural landscape."

M.N.R. is convinced that the Lake River settlement is of major significance to Polar Bear's history and that this ghost village is very complementary to the park's cultural landscape. The buildings will be maintained in their present condition.

19. HISTORICAL AREA 4 (SITE 415)

Comment: What is the future of the radar installations?

[Toronto Information Centre, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: Site 415 is of considerable significance to the history of Polar Bear Provincial Park as explained on pages 43 and 44 in the Background Information: The site is the remnant of the most important Mid-Canada Line base within the park. Dr. J. G. Nelson touches upon an essential concern in part of his submission: "I like the idea of using the old Mid-Canada Line here as an example of impact of past use and technology. We must do more of this instead of trying always to obliterate

the lesson," M.N.R. agrees with this statement.

* * * * *

Comment: "If emphasis is given to the term 'unspoiled wilderness', the question of leaving Site 415 (or any of the existing buildings) in the park seems unwarranted. The site is considered to be quite dramatic by those who actually visit the park. However, the number of non-visitors will certainly outnumber these few. Does the satisfaction of non-visitors and visitors knowing that an unspoiled wilderness area exists outweigh the fewer visitors' pleasure of viewing the site?

Goal 1 of the Master Plan Program can truly be achieved if the proposals below are followed. Important environmental changes have already occurred within the park boundaries. Removal of these changes can fulfill the objectives of this goal.

Persons exploring the park may find it interesting to stumble across an old trapper's cabin or to visit any of the buildings now present. Yet, the sense of escape from civilization and adventure in Canada's wilderness can be ruined. In a time of controversy concerning environmental destruction of the north with pipeline routes, in a time of wide-spread pollution and decreasing natural resources, and in a time of native rights versus pulp and paper company plans, the concept of virgin land and untamed wilds becomes increasingly more important to the Canadian citizen. Polar Bear Provincial Park has the potential to represent an area bearing these attributes. Removal of the present structures could represent the return of innocence, the unscarring of the landscape, reinforcing Canada's image as a 'true north, strong and free'.

The location of the park alone is a factor making it quite unique. Return to its wild state can add to its uniqueness... Allow the visitors to view a land freed from man's alterations. Let them observe nature's way of returning the environment back to its original state.

In summary, I recommend complete removal of all signs of the Mid-Canada base. If people are interested in the dramatic scene of such a site in this type of environment, they can be advised to visit the Pinetree Line outside the park boundaries.

The area can be left as a historical site for individuals interested in seeing the location, or it could be completely excluded from the historical areas. Alternately, it could be changed to a Nature Reserve Zone where the public can see how nature is reacting to removal of the physical disturbance."

[P. A. McMullan, Toronto, Ontario]

Comment: "It is not easy to reach any conclusion as to the value of the Mid-Canada Line as to historic structures or as potential park facilities. In general terms we believe the following: ...the Defense Department should be asked at their expense to remove all oil barrels and other debris - they brought it in - they can take it out.

...certain structures having no park use potential, but being duplicated at one or more Mid-Canada Line sites, should be removed. It would seem quite adequate to retain the structures of one site only for historical reasons and hangars and dormitory/type buildings at others until it can be determined that they have no park functions."

[Sierra Club of Ontario, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: The concept of unspoiled wilderness is vital: that is what Polar Bear Provincial Park is all about. M.N.R., however, does not believe that a few tiny "islands" of humanized landscape across the face of such a wild expanse will detract from the park's essential wildness. Indeed, structures such as the sod wigwam at the Brant River come close to being a part of the wilderness. In any case, the environmental changes which have resulted from the installation of the Mid-Canada Line bases can only be dissipated by time - with the exception of a general cleanup of debris and litter which has already been done at Site 415.

The structures at all the Mid-Canada Line sites (other than the historical representation at 415) could be removed without any historical or park management losses. However, the removal of sites other than 416 and 421 (which are close to airstrips) would likely result in new environmental damage, and the costs, which would be astronomical, would ultimately be borne by Canadian taxpayers.

M.N.R. thinks that these places, although possibly of minor nuisance, are like grains of sand on a beach: their presence is almost swallowed up by the surrounding wilderness. They are not offensive or a threat to the park's wildness.

20. POLICIES (HISTORICAL AREAS)

Comment: "I recommend that all trapper's cabins and other shelters within the park should be removed. The more interesting buildings could be reconstructed at the site chosen for the Hudson Bay Post settlement Lake River buildings, or they could be documented in a Park Museum at Moosonee, Winisk, or one of the access points."

[P. A. McMullan, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: The principle regarding this issue has been discussed in item 18.

* * * * *

Comment: "Other than more severe access restrictions, there are no policy differences indicated for nature reserve and historical zones as opposed to wilderness zones. Are any in fact contemplated? The stated purpose, to protect unimpaired wildland...for...recreational purposes apparently implies that camping will be permitted, possibly including primitive campsites, portage markers, and earth pit toilets and hiking trails."

[John Cross, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: The differences mainly concern designation although access restriction is a slight policy difference. Camping will be prohibited in all nature reserve zones and in all historical areas.

Throughout the park, development such as trail markers and earth pit toilets will be used sparingly, unobtrusively, and only where warranted by safety consideration - if at all.

* * * * *

Comment: "We support the basic objectives and policies proposed for historical areas, although questioning whether the Mid-Canada Line base merits such designation.

We urge that policy be clearly articulated that no recreation or reconstruction of historical facilities will be undertaken."

[The Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Don Mills, Ontario]

Response: The master plan will specify that "no restoration or reconstruction of historical facilities will be undertaken" in Polar Bear Provincial Park.

21. NATIVE PEOPLE AND POLAR BEAR PROVINCIAL PARK

Comment: "We are extremely interested in your proposal and we support your plans most heartily. One aspect of the proposal concerns the hunting of polar bear by natives. As you know, Canada is party to an international agreement for the protection of polar bears and has signed the agreement in depositing an Instrument of Ratification on December 16, 1974... The proposal outlined in your documents does not provide additional protection to the polar bear population than that which already exists outside the Polar Bear Provincial Park; therefore, the value of the proposal is negligible with respect to the International Agreement on Polar Bear Conservation. If, in your proposal, you were to establish a sanctuary which would include major denning sites, then you would help us in meeting one of the objectives of the Agreement. In such a sanctuary, polar bear hunting would be completely prohibited.

...may I suggest that you give serious consideration to the designation of a sanctuary for polar bears in your provincial park."

*[Canadian Polar Bear Research and Management Committee,
Ottawa, Ontario]*

Comment: *"The Chiefs of Treaty #9 made it known...that they will no longer merely react to government plans. They demand meaningful participation in the planning of all proposed development that affects the Treaty #9 area.*

It states in the Planning Proposal for Polar Bear Provincial Park that, 'the goose camps should remain only as long as the present operators or their families wish to maintain the facilities'. Is this the intention of the Indian people of the affected area? Grand Council Treaty #9 intends to use the Hartt Commission as a forum to present its comprehensive model for future development of Northern Ontario and believes it to be the appropriate vehicle for all interested parties to make their position known. This should apply to any development of the area known as Polar Bear Park."

[Grand Council Treaty #9, Timmins, Ontario]

Comment: *Concern regarding native peoples' hunting and fishing impact.*

[Toronto Information Centre, Toronto, Ontario]

Comment: *"...I believe that allowing continued hunting and fishing and other uses by native people is wise. One potential problem that worries me here however is the means of deciding on any conservation measure given possible overhunting locally, population declines for some reason, use of possibly damaging new technology, etc. How are current populations to be monitored and has any management mode be developed for consulting or otherwise involving the native people in conservation decisions? How will polar bear hunting fit into the Polar Bear Convention?"*

[J. G. Nelson, Waterloo, Ontario]

Comment: *"We appreciate that Polar Bear Park is different from other Provincial Parks in that it contains native peoples whose way of life includes living off the wildlife. With the establishment of a park and the potential for increased prosperity it may be that the resident population will increase sufficiently to deplete endangered species through overhunting. We would urge that all wildlife be closely monitored to ensure that viable herds are maintained. We would add that the Sierra Club is opposed to hunting in parks, but realize the unusual circumstances in this single instance..."*

...members who have visited the park report that Winisk has a garbage problem. They report that packaging materials are being widely transported throughout the park on snowmobiles and used to construct temporary hunting camps. If this is still the situation, we would recommend that such debris be removed, and that snowmobiles be restricted or removed from the park."

[Sierra Club of Ontario, Toronto, Ontario]

Comment: "...it seems that the Planning Proposal has neither fully articulated nor resolved the possible conflict between environmental preservation and Cree hunting interests. On p.1, it is claimed that 'environmental protection is given top priority', and 'in no case should the irreversible impairment of the environment be allowed'. This would seem to imply that in no case, including the case of a resurgence of interest in hunting by the Attawapiskat and Winisk Cree, would the polar bear be permitted to be hunted beyond the maximum take felt by biologists to be tolerable for the polar bear population. On the other hand, the letter to the Attawapiskat band on p.23 says that the park animals would be protected from hunting 'by people other than the Indians' and 'there will be no interference in the hunting...the Indians have enjoyed in this area for so many generations'. If a Cree (including, perhaps one who has not hunted for some time, or whose father did not hunt...) were to choose to take up polar bear hunting, would he not consider an attempt at prohibition based on a claimed threat to the population, 'interference' with his ancestral hunting rights? The proviso 'so long as the animal population is not threatened' is not mentioned in the letter. Elsewhere (pp. 5 & 6) it is 'hoped that native people will be interested in caring for...the animal species which live therein' and 'it is hoped that even native people, other than those who presently operate registered traplines will refrain from hunting in (Nature Reserve Zone 1)'. It is not explained what will be done if these hopes seem about to be frustrated. The tragedy of Tragedies of the Commons is that they happen!

It might seem that a band had only to be told that a population was endangered by their hunting for them to cut back on the number of animals taken. But it should be point out that about 10 years of warnings of the impending exhaustion of our energy resources has failed to reduce or even slow the rate of growth of energy consumption here in the south. P.4 [Background Information] points to the possibility of overcropping, and the motive for it (\$1000/hide). While the number of Crees interested in hunting at the present time may not threaten the resource, it could become so if there were an increased desire for self-support among the local bands (which I hope it is the government's policy to encourage). The number of Cree who would be offered alternative employment, say, guiding, is limited by the number of visitors permitted in the park, which again, is to be strictly controlled by environmental considerations. If either environmental or hunting interests are to be subordinated one to the other, it would seem to me that it is time to make this clear and unambiguous now, when the problem is not acute, so that it can be considered calmly. I should like to know what other messages (than Appendix 1) have passed between the Ministry Planning Board and the Attawapiskat and Winisk bands concerning this issue...

Are sled dogs to be exempted from the ban on pets in the park? Are snowmobiles to be a permissible exception to the ban on mechanized vehicles? If winter use of the park is to be permitted at all, some means must be permitted to move the large amounts of food and gear required. Winter backpacking, so popular in southern Ontario, is not feasible in areas like Polar Bear, where the isolation and large distances (and the foul weather) dictate far larger loads. Is the 'hunting and travel that the Indians have enjoyed in this area for so many generations' (p.23) meant to include the use of snowmobiles for hunting?"

[John Cross, Toronto, Ontario]

Comment: "...it is proposed that some sport hunting be permitted to continue within the park under native guidance. The planning concepts are not clear in this regard. At one point, it is stated that 'limited waterfowl hunting' would be permitted only at pre-existing Cree operated goose camps at the Sutton and Shagamu rivers Access Zones. Elsewhere, waterfowl, ptarmigan and snipe hunting are suggested

as acceptable species of these zones. Moreover, at the latter reference, there is no stipulation suggested as to existing camps, or native guidance. Nowhere in the concepts is there any discussion whatever of other sport hunting within the park, or of trophy hunting in the park through the natives.

A related problem raised though not truly dealt with by the foregoing is the taking of animals for hides or trophies by natives for or in the company of sportsmen. With increasing activity and attention to the area brought about by the park, these seem likely. We remain unequivocally opposed to such taking and feel that some means of preventing it must be found as a prerequisite to allowing native peoples to take animals in the park.

The taking of Polar Bear in the park should, in our view, be altogether terminated.

No commercial gathering of commodities like lichens should be permitted by native peoples, or anyone else, and this should be made clear in the plan.

The notation with regard to hunting that 'such special circumstances should in no way be construed as any sort of precedent with regard to other provincial wilderness parks in Ontario' must be contained in a plan which permits any of these activities...

We believe that some restrictions must be placed upon travel by natives within the park. Snowmobiles in particular must be prohibited as they relate to hunting since they greatly increase the efficacy of hunting. The use of personal (recreational) hovercraft should be precluded from within the park, and controls must be exerted to preclude the conflict between motorized and non-motorized visitors in those areas (if any) which seem likely to be problematic."

[The Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Don Mills, Ontario]

Comment: "Use of cloudberry - is there a potential here for a Unique Canadian Brandy, i.e. Polar Bear Brandy. There may be a potential industry for the local native women."

[The Cochrane Railway and Pioneer Museum, Cochrane, Ontario]

Comment: "Throughout the document there is some confusion surrounding restrictions, if any, on native use of outboards, snowmobiles, ATV's and fixed wing and helicopter chargers for hunting and trapping purposes. Perhaps [you] should spell out exactly what is allowed and where. [We] feel the major polar bear areas and goose nesting areas should be zoned and all mechanized travel prohibited. Later on in the document under the hunting section a definition of 'traditional' hunting methods is required.

...it appears as if native outboard motors in the park are restricted to the Sutton and Winisk rivers. Is this correct?

...under the Native People heading the sentence 'traditional activities such as hunting, fishing, trapping...' and further on '...The modern technique of hunting and trapping...' provide inadequate treatment of the native hunting question. It would appear different interest groups visualize different things when discussing the topic. Some interest groups...appear to have a fuzzy image of native hunting in storybook fashion. We believe the natives see themselves as hunting anyway they wish, including use of the most modern and efficient equipment available.

...we are mainly concerned that natives' harvest levels in the park do not exceed biologically allowable limits.

The native people want to hunt in the park and the general public appear to accept this providing no species are placed in jeopardy. Perhaps in the park plan it should simply be stated that hunting is allowed traditional style or otherwise, up to specific levels and under guidelines set by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources."

[A. J. Stewart, Moosonee, Ontario]

Comment: "...rules and policies which are good for parks are not always good for the native people and their traditional culture...in Polar Bear Park the native people must be given first consideration. ...perhaps some sort of legal agreement [between local native people and the Crown] on the park could be established that would go beyond government policies...

[Native people are] concerned that changes in park policies and plans may be made without consultation with the native people...a statement could be written into the master plan so that any changes could not be made without first consulting with the band. This could be a condition of the master planning process.

...young [native] people [are] concerned that the large dominant white society would have more influence on park policies than the minority Winisk people... The young [native] people wonder whether they can hunt, etc. in these [nature reserve] areas or not.

...as long as [animal] populations [are] not in trouble the native people [want] assurances that they could carry out their traditional activities.

...what [does] the 'planning proposal' [mean] by the term 'traditional'?

...[reword] the proposal...to say that 'band members' can operate the [goose] camps rather than the existing families.

...it [is] important for the park planners to understand the Indian concept of the environment and wildlife protection, as well as the white man's concept. The park plan must satisfy both the Indian and white man concepts. Laws to serve the white man's idea of conservation often harm the Indian way of life...the white man's laws have already altered the natives way of life. For example, the law states that native children must attend school. This means that native families must stay near the village. They are not free to move to the hunting areas like they used to. Now, in order to allow their children to attend school and still hunt for food, the native people must use snowmachines that allow them to quickly reach their hunting grounds. The snowmachine has become necessary to allow hunting as well as adherence to education laws. Park rules that might prohibit snowmachines would seriously hurt hunting and the native culture...the native people have already given up a great deal to satisfy your laws...please do not ask them to give up anymore."

[Representatives of the Winisk Band, Winisk, Ontario]

Response: No other single issue has caused the Ministry more difficulty or soul-searching than the dilemma of trying to satisfy the requirements of local native people on one hand, and those of the naturalist/wilderness groups - as articulated in the goal statement/discussion - on the other. The comments on this section reveal a gratifying degree of understanding and empathy from both natives and non-natives. Sadly, though, it seems there can be no truly satisfactory solution.

Ideally a wilderness park should meet a number of requirements. One of these is the absence of interference by man except in the most peripheral, transitory way. Paleolithic man satisfied this condition, largely because of an unsophisticated technology. In a very real sense, he (she) was an integral part of a sublime ecological balancing act. Environmentally, man was a successful predator - no less, no more. When high-powered rifles, steel traps, modern aircraft, and snow machines are added to this natural equation, the self-regulating ideal of the wilderness sanctuary is compromised.

The Crees who live near the park are the relatives of a people who have inhabited this section of the lowlands virtually since the region emerged from the Tyrrell Sea. Their claim to the use of the land - at least in a moral sense - is unassailable. The handful of people who live in the little communities near Polar Bear Provincial Park believe it should be their "right" - or at least their privilege - to hunt and trap, in order to help support themselves, in the tradition of their ancestors. And, in part, because of the demands imposed upon them by the macrosociety, to do this they argue that they must resort to some of the conveniences of modern technology. A few facts emerge from such an analysis.

- (1) Many of the requests/requirements of local native people regarding Polar Bear Provincial Park are just and reasonable.
- (2) Such requirements should be itemized and acknowledged in the forthcoming Polar Bear Provincial Park Master Plan.
- (3) Most of these requirements will in some way compromise the biological wilderness integrity of the park. At some point, if enough compromises are made, damage to the area's

wilderness status will reach the point where it no longer deserves to be called a wilderness park. For this reason some limitations must be placed upon items (1) and (2), and the master plan should acknowledge the degree to which it has strayed from the wilderness ideal. The plan should also point out that such compromises, while unavoidable in this situation, are an unequivocal departure from Ontario wilderness park policy.

Finally, despite the following, wilderness/perservationists and native people should not be thought of as implacable adversaries. To an important degree, both groups share many of the same aspirations for Polar Bear Provincial Park.

Of the many excellent submissions regarding this subject, none has quite the balance, sensitivity, insight and thoroughness of the eloquent statement by The Federation of Ontario Naturalists. It is well reasoned and fair to all factions. For this reason M.N.R. wishes to highlight the passage by reproducing it below.

We have great difficulty with these proposals.

On the one hand, there are arguments for permitting native freedom to hunt and trap in the park. They have done so for generations and have developed, in measure, a harmony with the land. Much of the taking is of a 'subsistence' nature rather than sport or commercial. And perhaps, most importantly, native co-operation will be essential in self-discipline and helping to protect the park.

There are also many reasons why hunting and trapping should be excluded from Polar Bear. Provincial and national parks are perceived and internationally recognized as sanctuary areas where intervention in natural processes and artificial management of wildlife are undertaken only where necessary to perpetuate the resource.

Trapping, although conducted to an extent for 'subsistence living', normally constitutes a form of commercial exploitation from within the parks. Such extraction is especially objectionable in a park created to protect natural interacting systems, and has no place in any provincial park.

Hunting by native peoples may be for 'subsistence', sport, or taking of trophies and hides. Modern hunting methods do not simulate natural selective forces. In a completely natural situation, the maintenance of healthy natural populations in balance with the environment is

achieved by steady pressures of predation and attrition on animals in poorer condition. Today's hunting techniques tend to reverse the process by favouring the survival of the less fit. Far more important, however, is the fear of overtaking, a problem dismissed as unlikely by many given present numbers of hunters and game. Yet experience in Alaska, documented by Mitchell [J. G. Mitchell, 1976: "Where Have All the Tutto Gone?"]...shows that the combination of such hunting and ready access through snowmobiles has been responsible for the collapse of Alaska's once numerous caribou. From the 1960's population of over 300,000, Alaska's caribou had tumbled to a mere 100,000 in 1975, and 50,000 in 1976. The Nelchina herd had crashed from 70,000 in 1962 to barely 8,000 in 1973; and the Fortymile herd from 50,000 in 1953 to just 6,000.

The simple truth is that there is no means to maintain historical patterns or even the status quo of native hunting and trapping. Hunter numbers seem bound to increase and efficacy of taking methods will increase.

Non-native sport hunting is also complex in as much as it affects the economy and attitude of the local native peoples. Without any question, no hunting of mammals, no expansion of present hunting, and no unguided hunting should be permitted. But in the case of long-established goose camps and hunting practices at them, the matter becomes difficult.

At the crux of the entire matter are 'our' responsibilities toward native peoples who have lived with the land for generations, and the attitudes of those people toward Polar Bear Park. Many among us consider it our responsibility not to further destroy a culture which has historically lived, in measure, in concert with the land. Others recognize that the co-operation and supportive attitude of the native population is essential to the viability and protection of the park, its unique habitat and biota, and its fragile species. Without a supportive attitude, self-discipline, respect for wildlife controls, protection of the park, and perhaps even its viability would be greatly diminished.

For all of these reasons, we are inclined to accept the thrust of the policies suggested; that legitimate historical activities of native peoples be accepted provided:

- (a) that these are not expanded or extended
- (b) that some form of control can be achieved which prevents improvement in efficacy to the point of damaging the resource
- (c) that these continue only so long as they remain actually being operated by present families, and
- (d) that there is a recognition and commitment by both Ministry of Natural Resources and the native community to reduce or terminate the activity when any damage upon the resource is shown or anticipated.

On these conditions only, we are prepared to accept: --

continued hunting of a subsistence
nature in the park

continued trapping in the park

continuation of hunting by non-
natives of traditionally taken
biologically stable species of
historical camps.

Ministry of Natural Resources agrees with these proposals except regarding the tenure of the goose camps as discussed below.

Self-defense should be the only acceptable reason for killing a polar bear in the park. For this reason, zoning may have to be used to keep visitor/polar bear incidents to a minimum. Because there is no restriction on native travel in the park, native people should also be allowed to shoot polar bear in defense of their property. To allow for such possibilities a provincial quota of 30 has been in operation for native people since 1972. Polar Bear Provincial Park is part of the quota area. As a result of surveys which have been conducted since the 1960's, bear numbers, if anything, seem to have increased, despite the quota. Any money received from the sale of hides should go to the appropriate band rather than to individual hunters.

The Indian bands will have the option of buying either goose camp in Polar Bear Provincial Park should the present owners wish to cease operations.

For some years wildlife surveys have been carried out by M.N.R. and the Canadian Wildlife Service for a number of species in Polar Bear Provincial Park. This work will continue and perhaps be augmented so that population change can be monitored and acted upon should there be any indication that a species is getting into any sort of difficulty.

Native people are very much involved with conservation decisions at Ministry of Natural Resources - sponsored trapline management meetings which are held periodically at all of the coastal communities.

Native people may use sled dogs in the park if they wish to.

Hunting of waterfowl, grouse (including ptarmigan), and snipe by non-natives will be permitted in the Shagamu and Sutton access zones only through the goose camp facilities. The remainder of the park will not be open to non-natives for any form of hunting.

"Taking of animals for hides or trophies by natives for... sportsmen" will be strictly forbidden.

"No commercial gathering of commodities like lichens will be permitted" by anyone, native or non-native.

No one is permitted to use ATV's in the park. Native people may use outboard motors anywhere in the park. Non-natives may use them on the Sutton and Winisk rivers if they are operated by a guide.

M.N.R. will investigate the possibility of producing a legal agreement between the Crown and the Attawapiskat, Fort Severn and Winisk bands pertaining to Polar Bear Provincial Park. One of the conditions it would stress is that no changes will be made to the master plan by M.N.R. without first consulting with the bands. M.N.R. will discuss with native people the possibility of declaring Nature Reserve Zone 1 a no hunting/trapping area which would also be off-limits to access except by completely primitive (non-mechanized) means. This 193,600 hectare area is considerably larger than Lake Superior Park, one of the province's largest parks. It is, from every standpoint, the most fascinating area of Polar Bear Provincial Park, and fortuitously it is most remote from the coastal villages. It is the least used, least important region of the park regarding the hunting and trapping activities of native people.

22. FIELD PERSONNEL

Comment: "We support fully the intention to employ local labour as far as is practical in maintaining the park, providing visitor services and acting as guides. Sierra Club members are opposed to the mandatory use of guide services, because many people will wish to be alone in a wilderness park - that is why they are there. However, park

personnel should be able to exercise some control over anyone planning an extended visit who is inadequately equipped, and all interior users should be required to register details of such trips before departure."

[Sierra Club of Ontario, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: Ministry of Natural Resources agrees with these statements.

* * * * *

Comment: *"We are highly supportive of the proposed hiring of native peoples to staff the park. We believe that this will:
do much to foster an appreciative, supportive and protective attitude of the native population
encourage self-discipline of poaching and other problem situations, and greatly ease any problems related to enforcement
provide the visitor with the best introduction and quality of experience in the park."*

[The Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Don Mills, Ontario]

Response: Agreed.

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Comment: *"...questions on the rates of [guide] fees..."*

Response: Guide rates will be determined by the native bands.

23. SITE 415 ACCESS ZONE (SITE PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS)

Comment: *"We note...that certain tracks will have to be developed for access to specific observation areas and that use will be made of existing roads. The proposal does not address the problem of obtaining road building materials nor does it make any specific references to extraction of materials."*

[Ontario Ministry of Transportation and Communications, Thunder Bay, Ontario]

Response: Very little additional road building material will be required for access point development. Where there is a slight need (at Site 415), materials are available at the pits near the old site. The pit near Site 416 (Nature Reserve Zone 3) must not be used for obvious reasons.

* * * * *

Comment: *"The government buildings could be constructed as model structures. Model buildings in the sense that they could be specially designed to have the least environmental impact possible. Innovative features such as solar energy power would certainly set a good example for the visitor. Example is a good method of encouraging the conservation and protection goals of the park. ...a growing number of citizens would like to see the government agencies practice energy, conservation and environmental protection which it advocates. The buildings could be made from local materials and possibly designed after the more traditional structures of the Indians in the area. This could add more character to the...park."*

[P.A. McMullan, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: Agreed as far as the application of these suggestions proves to be practical.

* * * * *

Comment: *"How about roving groups of people who have entered and ruined buildings at Sutton and Site 415 over the winter. Are you going to leave a 'keeper'?"*

[R. J. Hatkoski, Dwight, Ontario]

Response: It would be impractical to have a "keeper" at access points year-round. Regular aircraft patrols and inspections will be made, particularly at critical times of the year.

* * * * *

Comment: *"We are supportive of the principle, articulated in the concepts, that visitors should be responsible for removing their garbage rather than burying or otherwise disposing of it on site. We are inclined to feel that this principle should extend also to the Site 415 access zone, where the Ministry seems to propose collection and incineration. Certainly any refuse which must*

be disposed of on site should be incinerated. But we feel that the conditioning effect of mandatory removal, even in access zones, will help cultivate responsible behaviour of those travelling into 'the park' from Site 415."

[The Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Don Mills, Ontario]

Response: Agreed.

* * * * *

Comment: *"Wind factor of James Bay and Hudson Bay - I suggest that this should be investigated more thoroughly as to using wind power to generate AC for use at campsite. Also Winisk..."*

[The Cochrane Railway and Pioneer Museum Board, Cochrane, Ontario]

Response: Ministry of Natural Resources will investigate the possibility of using wind power to supplement its operations in the park and at Winisk.

24. BRANT RIVER ACCESS ZONE (SITE PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS)

Comment: *"Have you seen the damage over a winter on buildings by spring waters flooding the river banks?"*

[R. J. Hatkoski, Dwight, Ontario]

Response: Damage to facilities along park rivers could be very considerable during a bad breakup. For this reason, new facilities will be kept minimal and where possible, portable at any river located access points.

25. WINISK (SITE PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS)

Comment: *"The airport at Winisk will begin to play an important function of providing a servicing depot for visitors who will use aviation as a means of travel. Winisk could be a source for aviation fuel for aircraft owners who must supply their own fuel while in the park. It is not known what the impact will be on the present*

facilities of the airport. We would be interested in knowing what facilities should be expanded..."

*[Ontario Ministry of Transportation and Communications,
Thunder Bay, Ontario]*

Response: Present use indicates that no expansion is necessary. This could change, however, and Ministry of Natural Resources will advise the Ministry of Transportation and Communications of any new requirements.

* * * * *

Comment: *"The Townsite of Winisk, together with its airport and ancillary lands was omitted from Polar Bear, an action which we support.*

Although the potential for large scale developments on this site seems unlikely, we cannot avoid thinking of Banff and other townsites that have created enormous pressures on and problems for adjacent parks. We think, for example, of communities which treat parks as 'their' resource, to provide unlimited space and recreational provision for those visiting the town.

We seek some form of control on projects within the Winisk exclusion, to the effect that projects utilizing or dependant upon the park must be in keeping with park philosophy and direction.

[The Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Don Mills, Ontario]

Response: Agreed.

26. POTENTIAL ACCESS ZONE (SITE PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS)

Comment: *"We support the intent that an entire master plan review should not be needed merely to add a sixth access zone, but find the proposal too vague. Such looseness could lead to overdevelopment of inappropriate access zones. Any potential zone should be clearly defined in the master plan."*

[The Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Don Mills, Ontario]

Response: Agreed.

27. VISITOR SERVICES

Comment: "The Federation commends the excellent principles, direction and basic constraints articulated in the Activities section of the planning concepts. These are important in setting a guidepost against which future activities may be judged. The proposed provision of 'undocumented canoe routes' is excellent, as is the explicit exclusion of motorized vehicles.

Several activities which we consider basically inappropriate do appear in the list of activities contained in figure 9, although the chart fails to make it clear whether this is a list of suitable activities or interpretive subjects. Although interpretive materials on survival would be entirely appropriate to teach visitors what to do in case of accident, we consider survival camping an inappropriate activity and one which should not be encouraged in the park. As earlier discussed, hunting and trapping are activities which could be continued in the park under special conditions, but they should not be promoted by coverage in interpretive materials.

The basic intent and suggestions with regard to trails are commendable. There is, however, legitimate concern about the type of trail and specifications which the authors might have in mind. Trails should not be developed as gravel ribbons or upgraded in a similar fashion. A prerequisite to any trail's development is a commitment to monitor it and close it down for long enough to permit rehabilitation when damage occurs, no matter how long that may require. There is also specific concern with regard to the trails contained in figure 8. These are shown as connecting to a road extending (apparently) 5 miles as the only connection to Site 415. Since no roads are shown on the appropriate map as extending from the Site 415 access zone, we are unclear whether this is a new or existing road, or whether it is the Ministry's intention to maintain it. No new road should be developed, and any existing roadway should be allowed to deteriorate to the status of a path."

[The Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Don Mills, Ontario]

Response: Agreed. Access from Site 415 to the proposed trail network north of Site 415 is via the existing Mid-Canada Line road to James Bay. This "road", in the decade and a half since the defense operation ceased, has reverted "to the status of a path".

* * * * *

Comment: *"...we feel [visitor services operations] should be confined to Moosonee, Winisk and possibly Site 415. The problems and expense of maintaining staff and facilities at any other points would be prohibitive. Apart from the logistics of servicing these remote sites we find it difficult to visualize any staff manning the sites throughout the park season, recognizing the park may only have a handful of visitors. Without question, any structures [you] erect will be vandalized."*
[A. J. Stewart, Moosonee, Ontario]

Response: Agreed, except that park publications should be available at the Shagamu and Sutton goose camps, and a few basic facilities may be required elsewhere.

28. ANGLING (VISITOR SERVICES)

Comment: *"...on angling, would it be possible and useful to prohibit angling in some streams, including some of the best streams, so as to be able to use them as controls for observing and measuring effects of fishing on fish populations, river bank areas, etc., over the years? Perhaps, also, there may be a basis for rotation here, although I believe it might be quite useful to set some streams aside for no fishing."*
[J. G. Nelson, Waterloo, Ontario]

Response: Nature Reserve Zone 1 will be designated as a fishing sanctuary: no fishing will be allowed in it. This watershed area is completely within the park boundaries.

* * * * *

Comment: *"There are three aspects of the angling policy which merit review."*

Two 'planks' of the policy appear in sharp contradiction with one another. The first of these suggests that angling should be viewed 'as a component of the wilderness activity rather than a separate activity on its own'. The other, in direct juxtaposition, suggests (in effect) advertising angling as a specific purpose for visiting the park. Consistency should be the rule and we support the former principle.

More important, there is legitimate concern about angling pressure and its effect in 'fishing down' the standing crop in waters of inherently low annual productivity. If quality of angling experience is to be retained, so also must fish size.

Maximum sustained yield does not produce optimum angling experience, depending instead upon depressing standing crop and fish size. Management should be based upon maintaining standing crop and fish size, with whatever controls are necessary to that end.

No stocking or transfer of live bait should be permitted anywhere within the park. The movement of exotic species within bait fish is a problem steadily growing in importance and one which should not be risked under any circumstances in a park set aside for biological purposes."

[The Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Don Mills, Ontario]

Response: Agreed.

29. CANOEING (VISITOR SERVICES)

Comment: "...I would like to express support for the planning approach implied by the phrases in Background Information... 'to serve as a temporary sanctuary for people and permit them to escape from the potentially deleterious effects of the rapid changes in our lifestyles' and 'a freedom of choice for the future that is inherent in undeveloped landscapes'. It seems to me that these phrases imply, to the exclusion of any other proposal, that one on page 14 of the Planning Proposal..., 'some rivers, suitable for canoeing should purposely be left undocumented'.

Indeed, all of them should! Documented, signed canoe trails, whose every foot has been detailed like the tourist traps of Europe, abound in our province. A 'free choice' which is rapidly vanishing is the freedom to travel in unguidebooked areas, depending entirely on one's own sense and judgement. This absence of choice is, in fact, one of the 'deleterious effects' of an increasingly regimented and normative society. Since the choice of a well-documented route has already been offered to those who prefer it--several hundred well-documented routes, in fact--any park as remote as Polar Bear whose planning takes into account the 'sanctuary' concept must be left as undocumented as possible.

I refer here only to canoe routes, of course, and not to the scientific documentation of natural features: noteworthy geological, physiographic, biological, etc. occurrences and phenomena. I suggest that only information affecting the feasibility of a trip be published, i.e. that without which it would be impossible to know whether a route should even be planned. For example, published notes on the Mishamattawa-Shagamu route should contain little but the fact that the route exists, the restrictions (if any) on seasonal use due to water level, the location of the vital height of land portage, and warnings of conditions significantly different from those encountered on most canoe trips (e.g. the scarcity of dry land for camping, abundance of mosquitoes, tides along the coast, etc.). They should not include descriptions of each portage and campsite on the river. Notes for the Oppinnagau would say whether or not aircraft could land at Oppinnagau Lake. For the Sutton, no portage information should be provided beyond a reprint of D. B. Dowling's 1901 description of the portage from the Ekwan to Sutton Lake (and the fact that it has been burned over since then).

Canoeists would also benefit by more general descriptions (intended for other users as well) of the geology, flora, and fauna of the park. As a matter of fact, I would be happy to see a policy of reprinting old Geological Survey maps, as opposed to gathering new descriptions for route guides..."

[John Cross, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: M.N.R. agrees except that complete canoe route information for the Winisk River (a provincially designated canoe route and a provincial waterway park) will continue to be made available to the public.

30. HUNTING (VISITOR SERVICES)

Comment: *"...on waterfowl hunting by visitors to the two Cree camps, will there be quotas or numbers?"*

[J. G. Nelson, Waterloo, Ontario]

Response: Limits will be according to those set for ducks, geese, and snipe by the Water Migratory Bird Convention Act, and for grouse (including ptarmigan) by the Ontario Game and Fish Act.

31. SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (VISITOR SERVICES)

Comment: *"...with regard to the provision of services for special interest groups by the Ministry, are these all to be native people?"*

[J. G. Nelson, Waterloo, Ontario]

Response: Aspects of this issue have already been discussed under item 16.

* * * * *

Comment: *"One consideration which should be kept in mind is that the Park's remoteness, severity of climatic conditions and terrain, will combine to restrict access to the well-off. A province seeking to promote social justice would be justified in imposing heavy taxes upon those able to afford a visit. They should contribute largely to the current overall costs of preservation and maintenance. The photography buff; the flower, plant and insect collector (and of course scientific parties), should enjoy definite cost and facility advantages as compared with the sportsman, hunter or fisherman."*

[Harold A. Wills, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: The Ministry believes it would be difficult and ultimately inequitable to subsidize one group of users (based on their interests) in preference to others. (Certain groups; for example, Ontario senior citizens, will continue to enjoy minor advantages regarding such things as entry fees.)

* * * * *

Comment: *"We believe also that the Ministry might set up a charter air service through public tendering, to make the park available at a lower cost to more visitors and at the same time, retain control over the number of visitors and their distribution. Under the above, the Ministry would also have the opportunity to carry out a survey of visitors, obtain impressions and other useful input data which would serve a function in 5 year park plan reviews. We think that special interest groups - botanists, hikers, photographers, etc., could best be served by the above method, and be taken to the appropriate part of the park at the appropriate season."*

[Sierra Club of Ontario, Toronto, Ontario]

Comment: *[One] of the...most problematical aspects are the concepts proposed with regard to day-use and 'air tourism' within the park. The problem arises because those means of visitation which will provide the least damage to the park will provide the greatest (potential) conflict with wilderness visitors.*

There is no question or difficulty in regard to arrival of park visitors by aircraft; the only feasible transportation to most access points is by air.

The planning documents suggest, however, that many visitors might view and 'visit' the park by flying back and forth over it. A second suggestion is that airborne tour groups might be provided with an area as one of the access zones (Site 415) where they could land, view the habitat in perhaps a few-hour tour, and leave again without ever travelling 'into' the more natural area of the park.

Herein lies the dilemma. Polar Bear's habitat is extremely fragile, and slow to recover from damage. Airborne visitation would provide the ability to service many visitors without

habitat damage. But on the other hand, aircraft use disturbs the quietude and wilderness qualities for these visitors on the ground and could lead to undue harassment of some wildlife, notably polar bears, caribou, and marine mammals. For these types of reasons, aircraft 'use' of other parks has been progressively phased out.

FON has no magical solution to the dilemma; and it may well be that the numbers will never be great enough to pose serious problems. We do, however, feel that habitat and wildlife protection must take precedence over even visitor experience, and that eventualities must be anticipated and dealt with. For these reasons, we are prepared to support 'air tourism' and day-use only on conditions that:

- (a) a low quota is set and enforced on numbers of aircraft to minimize conflict with other users
- (b) that the Ministry commit itself to intensive scrutiny of the ground area used by day-users and to closing the area to use when site deterioration develops
- (c) day-use groups are accompanied at least while on the ground with an MNR guide
- (d) that minimum flying elevations can be set and that severe penalties be in place for any harassment of wildlife."

[The Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Don Mills, Ontario]

Comment: "Tours and charter flights look good.

Air flights look costly. Is the average person going to be able to visit this park?"

[The Cochrane Railway and Pioneer Museum, Cochrane, Ontario]

Comment: "...we would emphasize the tremendous logistical problems associated with moving about the lowlands. Tour groups and day-use visitors will have to be well prepared for disappointments, delays and aborted trips. Any tours will be extremely costly and we wonder how many visitors it will take to justify the cost?"

[A. J. Stewart, Moosonee, Ontario]

Response: As mentioned in the Planning Proposal, the Ministry may investigate the possibility of arranging charter flights which would be operated by private companies. As a number of respondents point out, there are reasons why this would be a good thing. Potential dangers of such a scheme would have to be closely watched. Under no circumstances will wildlife harrassment be tolerated. "Habitat and wildlife protection must take precedence over even visitor experience." Any pilot effort involving air charters will be done very conservatively and with careful consideration for campers' wilderness experience.

32. VISITOR CHARACTERISTICS AND VISITOR THEME RELATIONSHIPS (VISITOR SERVICES)

Comment: "...I am sympathetic to the point about interpretive overkill. But on a related matter...how are you going to meet the needs of the vicarious user and provide a wider clientele and support than the relatively narrow user group described in the proposal?"
[J. G. Nelson, Waterloo, Ontario]

Response: The needs of the vicarious user will be met at Moosonee and by provincially available media such as publications and audio visual materials.

33. AIRCRAFT PATROL (PARK OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT)

Comment: Concern over regulation and enforcement of policies and rules.
[Toronto Information Centre, Toronto, Ontario]

Comment: "I do agree with increased aircraft patrol...as being necessary on a regular basis for enforcement purposes. I am surprised by the number of small planes (float) that we have encountered from Winisk, Fort Severn to Fort Rupert being both Canadian and American. In the 20 years of living near and travelling in Algonquin Park, I have never been inspected for game limits or travel permits."
[R. J. Hatkoski, Dwight, Ontario]

Comment: "Regulations will have to be drafted so as to confer upon Ministry personnel adequate powers to enforce promptly and fully the controls required by the master plan."

[Harold A. Wills, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: Ministry of Natural Resources' officials responsible for enforcement work in Polar Bear Park will have full authority to do so.

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Comment: "...there is no question that aircraft will be the only means of moving about the park. However, fixed wing aircraft will probably not be suitable with their very restricted landing capabilities. A helicopter will be essential to the park operation."

[A. J. Stewart, Moosonee, Ontario]

Comment: "Checking and enforcement is more likely to be needed in Polar Bear Park away from approved access points where there will, presumably, be guides or park staff. Rescue operations are more likely to be needed by those travelling in the interior of the park. I would suggest instead of a float-plane that a helicopter, or at least a plane equipped with balloon tires, which can land anywhere where the beach lines are free of trees, be stationed in the park."

[H. G. Lumsden, Maple, Ontario]

Response: Ministry of Natural Resources will attempt to strike a balance between the best type of enforcement aircraft and economy.

34. ACCESS CONTROL AND PERMITS (PARK OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT)

Comment: "Problems may arise in rationing public access to and use of facilities... It is suggested that no permits be granted, and no schedules be approved, either in Toronto or at the park, but that all applications should be handled first by mail, from a single office in Cochrane or Moosonee."

Exceptions should be considered only for studies or work of provable scientific value, and arrangements even for these

should be cleared at an early stage with the single control point, guided by the rule of 'first come, first served'. At the earliest stage of application, groups should be required to set out clearly the number of persons taking part, their equipment, supply and guide arrangements, their proposed travel routes, methods and time schedules."

[Harold A. Wills, Toronto, Ontario]

Comment: "I do believe that Moosonee should be the access point for information and/or travel permits if necessary."

[R. J. Hatkoski, Dwight, Ontario]

Comment: "...we agree that aircraft should require landing permits for the park. Winisk and Moosonee are the only logical permit issuing locations."

[A. J. Stewart, Moosonee, Ontario]

Response: Moosonee and Winisk, which are both in the Ministry of Natural Resources' administrative district of Moosonee, will be the permit issuing control centres.

35. FOREST PROTECTION (PARK OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT)

Comment: Concern about wild fire in the area.

[Toronto Information Centre, Toronto, Ontario]

Comment: "I believe the section on fire policy is a sound one."

[J. G. Nelson, Waterloo, Ontario]

Comment: "Proposed policy with regard to fire is an enlightened approach. We are anxious that park activities not change fire regimes in one direction or the other, but find it difficult to ascertain whether this is a legitimate concern in Polar Bear Park."

[The Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Don Mills, Ontario]

Response: Ministry of Natural Resources suspects that park activities will not alter wild fire occurrence and frequency appreciably; however, if it becomes apparent that this is not so, the Ministry approach will have to be modified accordingly.

36. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT AND PHASING

Comment: "I do wish that there could be, and this is a limitation of mine, a chance of altering the plan as it is, to counter many of the proposals with a sense of practicability which as I read further on in your Phase Proposals is not evident. My travelling partner and I have travelled by airplane for 4 years to Polar Bear Park and the surrounding areas and feel that we have a simple natural concern for the area. We are literally scared at your proposals.

You mention a 'trend towards greater affluence and more leisure time...', 'any prolonged contraction of this continent's economy...' (page 7). These words were a sign of caution a few years ago, but now is there not more meaning to them? These words should cause you to have a strong second look at the proposal. They are from the section entitled 'Anticipated Visitor Use' which is a major basis for the proposals. The empire to be created to carry out the proposals is in direct contradiction to the idea of an energy crisis, tightening of budgets, release of staff, reduction in hiring or is this empire building?"

[R. J. Hatkoski, Dwight, Ontario]

Response: Ministry of Natural Resources is very conscious of spending restraints, and the development recommended in the Planning Proposal, and further delineated in this document, is relatively modest. Some minimal development is essential, in addition to setting aside and protecting the parkland. A statement by respondent Harold A. Wills helps put this issue into what M.N.R. feels is its correct perspective: "It is rarely a simple matter to obtain public support for projects which attempt to protect the interests of generations in coming centuries, but which may restrain the interests and appetites of taxpayers (at present)."

37. LOST RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT VALUES (CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT AND PHASING)

Comment: "...I believe the inclusion of a Lost Resources Development Value

section is a good idea."

[J. G. Nelson, Waterloo, Ontario]

Response: Ministry of Natural Resources agrees that there are important benefits to establishing this area as a parkland.

* * * * *

Comment: *"The section dealing with Lost Resource Development Values appears to contain a realistic appraisal of those resources whose exploitation is affected or foregone by creation of the park. The section, however, is visibly lacking in a philosophy that resource exploitation in parks should be foregone. Since this section will constitute a precedent for future park planning, we consider it important that this reflect an attitude that short-term benefits of exploitation must be foregone in order to preserve representative natural interacting systems dedicated to future generations."*

[The Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Don Mills, Ontario]

Response: Ministry of Natural Resources agrees that there are important benefits to establishing this and other areas as a parkland as discussed in the Ontario Provincial Parks Planning and Management Policies. A statement to this effect will appear in the master plan.

* * * * *

Comment: *"The wording of the last paragraph...in the section on Lost Resources Development Values is peculiar. At present, we do not permit mineral exploitation in Polar Bear Park. How then, would reservoirs of oil and gas be found there?"*

[H. G. Lumsden, Maple, Ontario]

Response: Were offshore petroleum reservoirs to be found along the park boundaries, it could be assumed that oil occurred inside the park, particularly if the petroleum-bearing structure(s) appeared to enter the park.

38. APPENDIX B

Comment: *"Appendix B...proposing policy to govern research projects is of special importance. Its substance should be retained in regulations, and perhaps even in legislation."*

[Harold A. Wills, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: Current policy for research in Ontario provincial parks will be included in the Polar Bear master plan. M.N.R. has a high level of control over this item.

39. MISCELLANEOUS

Comment: *"My only reservation is that I always look somewhat critically at such elaborate print jobs turned out at public expense. I know that the project deserves such a handsome [treatment and format]; still a major part of our current problems spring from government overspending..."*

The Polar Bear booklets deserve much praise for their typographical accuracy and good printing to balance the comment above."

[Harold A. Wills, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: Although very conscious of the public spending problem, M.N.R. believes that the style of the Background Information and Planning Proposal was warranted by the international importance of Polar Bear Provincial Park.

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Comment: *"With respect to the planning proposal, I liked the general approach and form including the explicit expressions of uncertainty and the need for review and change from time to time."*

[J. G. Nelson, Toronto, Ontario]

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Comment: *"Where possible, have signs and information printed trilingually -- in English, French and Cree. Not only is the addition of Cree a help for the local Indians, but non-native visitors will certainly begin to feel the atmosphere of the park."*

[P. A. McMullan, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: The very few signs which will appear in Polar Bear Park will use symbols (as approved in the Ontario Provincial Parks System Sign Manual).

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Comment: *"...one of the most farsighted projects the Province of Ontario has ever undertaken, while at the same time giving the scientific community fact, proposals, and an invitation to share in the planning for the future...a magnificent, exciting enterprise."*

[Harold A. Wills, Toronto, Ontario]

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Comment: *"...reference should be included to facilities for both land and float planes at Cochrane. While scheduled and charter services are dealt with, should there not be some reference also to the use of private planes?"*

[Harold A. Wills, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: Moosonee and Winisk and to some extent Attawapiskat and Fort Severn are the primary air service centres for access into Polar Bear Provincial Park. Most pilots are aware of the facilities at the many secondary centres such as Cochrane.

M.N.R. acknowledges the importance of privately owned aircraft in providing access to Polar Bear Provincial Park.

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Comment: *"It must be recognized that the severe conditions imposed by climate, limited fertility of the land, exposure to sub-Arctic conditions, isolation, etc., will at times threaten food supply of both the animal and human populations. There should be mention in the Proposals of provision in departmental budgets each year for automatic measures to permit prompt relief when necessary. Disease and cyclical fluctuations in population and environment are to be expected, and counter-balancing operations must be guaranteed, exempt from delays for study, discussion and red tape."*

[Harold A. Wills, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: The Ontario Provincial Parks Planning and Management Policies, 1978 says that: "Management of fauna will be directed wherever possible to the maintenance of an evolving natural succession" (WI-IV-3). This implies minimal interference with the natural system - even during such biologically catastrophic events as natural wildfires. The park winter fauna is well adapted to the rigours of northern winters.

M.N.R., of course, is obligated to provide emergency assistance to park visitors.

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Comment: "Our Committee, although familiar with Provincial Park matters, is not fully acquainted with the Polar Bear Region of Ontario. You might consider providing us the opportunity to view the region in person. We would be most happy to accommodate such a gesture on your part."

[The Conservation Council of Ontario, Toronto, Ontario]

Response: Because of constraints on government spending this recommendation is not possible. Occasionally, field trips sponsored by naturalist groups provide opportunities to visit the park at comparatively attractive rates.

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Comment: "...only involve those parties who have actually used and are familiar with the area."

[R. J. Hatkoski, Dwight, Ontario]

Response: M.N.R. recognizes that respondents who have actually visited Polar Bear Provincial Park have many valuable insights into matters affecting it because of this experience. However, the Ministry has received many excellent suggestions from people who have candidly admitted that they have never been near Polar Bear. M.N.R. is pleased to use any such recommendations in the production of a park master plan.

** * * * **

Comment: "...we commend the park planners for the production of an excellent 'Background Information' and for establishing the basis of a master plan."

[Sierra Club of Ontario, Toronto, Ontario]

Comment: "I have recently had the pleasure of examining a copy of your excellent background document entitled Polar Bear Provincial Park. It is lucid, informative, and eminently readable, -- a model from which others could benefit substantially."

[Parks Canada, Winnipeg, Manitoba]

Comment: "The planning proposals for Polar Bear Provincial Park are unquestionably the best master planning concepts brought forward by the Ministry for any of our provincial parks. They constitute a sound approach, cognizant of the park's unique biological qualities and fragility...deserving of both commendation and

support. The fundamental approach to planning is much stronger than that used historically. It is a fresh direction and thrust which serves as an excellent approach for planning of other parks...

During our review of the planning proposals, numerous aspects were marked with 'excellent' or other plaudits. It would be impossible to comment upon each of these or to deal with minor differences of opinion. It should be noted, however, that a master plan response tends to deal with these areas viewed as problems in much higher proportion to those meriting support and adoption."

[The Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Don Mills, Ontario]

Comment: "What [will] the procedure...be for the eventual development of the park plan?"

[Representatives of the Winisk Band, Winisk, Ontario]

Response: Based on the foregoing comments from interested individuals and groups, a master plan for Polar Bear Park will now be produced. It should be completed in 1980. The master plan as approved by the Minister of Natural Resources in accordance with the Provincial Parks Act will be the official policy for the future planning and management of the park.

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A SUMMARY OF POLICY CHANGES RESULTING FROM PUBLIC INPUT INTO THE POLAR BEAR PROVINCIAL PARK PLANNING PROGRAM

- Protection will be emphasized over use.
- The park/native people relationship will be identified in an appendage to the goal statement.
- First aid facilities will be available at staffed access points.
- M.N.R. will recommend only Transport Canada approved aircraft landing areas. Any other access points may be used at the aircraft operator's risk.
- If required, to ensure that residents have access opportunity to their resource, separate resident and non-resident quotas will be incorporated in the visitor regulation program giving priority to resident demand.
- Bottle and can restrictions are being considered for Polar Bear Provincial Park.
- The Ontario Ministry of the Environment will review/approve/monitor all facility development and operation in the park.
- The importance of watershed, etc. control in the lands adjacent to the park will be identified in the Moosonee District Land-use Plan so that new developments in the northern section of the Ontario lowlands will not be allowed to affect Polar Bear's environment. Negotiations with the territorial government of the N.W.T. and the Province of Ontario could ensure that regulations complementary to Polar Bear's are in effect along all the park's coastline and beyond.
- Nature Reserve Zone 1 (Black Duck River) will be altered to enclose additional areas of faunal importance.
- The master plan will specify that no restoration or reconstruction of historical structures will take place in Polar Bear.
- Many of the requests/requirements of local native people regarding the park are just and reasonable. Such requirements will be itemized in the forthcoming master plan. The master plan should acknowledge the degree to which it has strayed from the wilderness ideal - and from Ontario wilderness park policy. Furthermore, traditional gathering activities of native people should not be expanded or allowed to damage the park resource.
- The Indian bands will have the option of buying either of the park goose camps should the present owners wish to cease operations.
- M.N.R. will investigate the possibility of producing a legal agreement between the Crown and the three "park" Indian bands pertaining to Polar Bear Provincial Park.

- M.N.R. will discuss with native people the possibility of declaring Nature Reserve Zone 1 (Black Duck River) a no hunting/trapping area in which entry would be by non-mechanized means only.
- Guide rates will be determined by native bands.
- M.N.R. may use wind power to supplement its park operations if this is practical.
- Survival camping will not be permitted in Polar Bear.
- Nature Reserve Zone 1 will be designated a fishing sanctuary.
- Based on these comments from interested individuals and groups, a master plan for Polar Bear Provincial Park will be produced. It should be completed in 1980.



Ministry of
Natural
Resources

Hon. James A. C. Auld
Minister
Dr. J. K. Reynolds
Deputy Minister

April, 1979

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